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**CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.**

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[NO. 16.]

EDITED AND PUBLISHED BY JOSHUA T. RUSSELL.

**RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.**

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**FOREIGN.**

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**METHODIST MISSIONS.**  
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*Report for the year 1817, of the Executive Committee for the management of the missions, first commenced by the Rev. John Wesley, the Rev. Dr. Coke, and others; and now carried on under the direction of the Methodist Conference.*

(Continued from page 229, vol. 5.)

**AMERICA.**

"*Abaco* having been visited by brothers Ward and Head, and the seeds of the gospel sown there, it has excited an ardent desire in many to seek "the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins." The society is very small, occasioned by the absence of the preacher; but, from the constant attendance of the people on divine worship, we have reason to think, if a preacher were stationed there, it would not be long before there would be a good society."

"*Long Island* has been without any minister for many years. There are many who are willing to hear and attend to the word of truth, but there are others who see no excellency in it; yet there seems to be a door opening for the spread of the gospel; and, if possible, it should be visited by the brethren; and should a barrier or two be removed, there would be work enough for a missionary, and no doubt but seals would be added to his ministry.

	Whites,	Coloured & Blacks.	Total.
New-Providence	73	335	408
Elenthera	263	54	319
Harbour Island	211	189	400
Abaco	12	2	14
Long Island	1	4	5

Total in the Bahamas	562	584	1146
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In some of the islands the societies have decreased, owing partly to the fluctuation to which societies of negroes are subject, under a strict discipline, partly to opposition, and, in one or two instances, to large removals, from the depression of commerce; but in others the increase has been unprecedented. In Jamaica, though, independent of the act to which allusion has been made, the freedom of

worship is very limited, and the complement of missionaries not complete: the increase to the societies has been near 1000, with access to new and promising fields of labour. In Antigua, the increase is 1000; in Demerara, 600; and in the Bahamas, in the midst of restraint and difficulty, the number is above that of the last year. This favourable state of the mission calls for additional gratitude, when it is considered that the societies have been deprived of their full share of missionary care by the death, at an early period of the year, of four active and useful missionaries, who fell victims to their labours and the diseases incident to those climates. They, however, honoured the missionary cause in life and death, and the donation of 100*l.* sterling to the widow of Mr. Bugar, from the parish of St. Thomas, Jamaica, voted at a meeting of the magistrates and vestry as a token of respect for the memory of her husband, is a pleasing proof that Jamaica has many respectable inhabitants who value the Gospel, and appreciate the pious zeal of those who hazard their health and life to teach it to their negroes.

Besides the new stations in Jamaica, the island of *Barbadoes* offers encouragement for a new trial, and the appointment of a missionary. Mr. Westerman, appointed by the last conference, was prevented from proceeding there by other arrangements which it was necessary to make for the supply of a more promising station. The society is in number not more than 28, and the old chapel in a state of decay. Mr. Woolley has, however, lately visited this island hitherto the almost only exception to the success of the efforts of our missionaries in the West Indies, and proposes the erection of a new chapel, to which one benevolent gentleman of the island has promised 100*l.*

*Tobago* has not hitherto appeared upon our list of West India missions; but having been recommended to the committee by Messrs. Brown and Catts, who made a short stay there on their way to St. Domingo, it was lately visited by Mr. Woolley, under the direction of the Antigua district meeting; and offers sufficient encouragement for the immediate appointment of a missionary. The fact that there is but one minister in the colony, shows sufficiently the necessity of extending help to its lost population, many of whom are "perishing for lack of knowledge." The intention has been warmly encouraged by some of the principal gentlemen of the island, who, influenced by their regard to religion, and the moral interests of the negroes, have offered subscriptions in support of the mission, so liberal as to warrant the hope that the work there may be conducted with trifling expense to the mission fund.

To the supply of new stations in the West Indies, and the places of the missionaries who have died, or returned home, a considerable number of new missionaries will be requisite; and the committee are happy to state, that, notwithstanding the reproaches, labours, and hazards of that mission, no failure in the supply of qualified missionaries is anticipated. Still, through the influence of Him whose Spirit alone kindles the true flame of missionary zeal, a sufficient number are offering themselves for this service; and others, who had

served their appointed time in the islands, now in the ministry at home, have again proposed themselves to re-enter the same field, and to fill up the ranks of those who have fallen in the glorious warfare.

The intelligence from the two missionaries sent out since the last conference to the republican part of the island of St. Domingo is of a very interesting nature. Their first impressions on entering a country where the superstitions of popery had been merely superinduced upon the ignorance of paganism, without being accompanied with a just knowledge of Christianity, were somewhat discouraging, and especially as for a few of the first weeks they spent in the island, they were rendered unable, by attacks from fever, from entering upon their work.\* Their recent letters are, however, written under cheering anticipations of being able to effect, in some good degree, the great objects of their mission. The freedom of religious worship guaranteed by the laws, the respect paid by the people to every form of religion, and the earnest and attentive manner in which the congregations listen to the preaching of the word of God, are all encouraging circumstances, and warrant the hopes which the committee have indulged, that divine providence may make use of

\* Mr. Brown writes, "We first set foot on this ground February 7, 1817. Port au Prince covers, as near as I can guess, about a square mile. The inhabitants may amount to about 20,000. They are frenchified in their manners; but, without exception, taken in whole, the most *religious* people I ever saw. It is true, many of them do not know what a New Testament is; and others, the more sensible, seem to have no idea that it is a divine book, and contains the words of eternal life. They have publick market on Sundays, plays, &c. Marriage is neglected; fornication and adultery are common, and the place is noted for thieving; yet I hardly conversed with any who would not assert and maintain, "*Je suis bon Chretien, bien bon Chretien.*" Popery has reigned in this place undisturbed. The people have been trained up in its mummeries; and whatever their actions may have been, after confession, doing penance, repeating prayers, &c. they look upon themselves as immaculate.

"We were a full fortnight after our arrival before we had a positive answer from the president; and before we had this, we could not begin our labours in publick. The reason of this delay was, that his excellency was in the country, he and his family having been very sick. In the mean time I caught a fever, which laid another barrier in our way; and it was not till the third Sunday, March 2, that brother Catts opened his mission in publick. We have hired a house: one large room which is our chapel, and two small ones. Last Friday night we were crowded; and the last two Sundays, whilst I preached at home, Mr. Catts preached at the house of a person who kindly visited him during his illness. We purpose trying the open air shortly. We have distributed a large number of tracts; but it pains us that we can get so few copies of the Scriptures circulated. The worth of these is altogether unknown by most in this place. Brother Catts has twice visited a place in the country, *Croix des Bouquets*, where he has met with the most flattering reception. From a pulpit of stone, under a tree; with the commandant of the place at his side, a file of soldiers round the congregation, to the deeply attentive inhabitants he declared the faithful saying, 1 Tim. i. 15. The Commandant then gave an address enforcing what he had said. The people gave a shout of approbation."



the brethren there to communicate the important blessings of religious knowledge to a people whose civil condition is rapidly advancing, under a liberal government and an enlarging commerce. "Our congregation," says Mr. Brown, in a letter dated Port au Prince, May 30, 1817, "fills the house, and covers the pavement before it; and if sighs, tears, and groans are marks of their being affected, these we witness. Very often they reponse to what we say in our sermons. Two or three Sundays ago, preaching on Luke xxiv. 46, 47, towards the close, wishing to rivet the word on their minds, I addressed them: "Do you think, my friends, that we have come here to publish a lie?" Instantly, "No, no!" echoed from every quarter. Taking advantage of this declaration, I proceeded to insist on our total depravity and guilt; on the absolute necessity of repentance and remission of sins; and pointed them to Jesus Christ as the only Saviour; whilst, "Yes, yes!" was reiterated at the close of almost every sentence. 'Tis pleasing to see a numerous congregation; 'tis pleasing to see our hearers deeply attentive, and moved with what is delivered; but short of their conversion we cannot be satisfied. However, when their profound ignorance of the leading principles of religion, together with their superstitions, are taken into the account, conversions can hardly be expected as the work of a day. That many of their hearts are touched, I have no doubt. We frequently receive proofs of their affection.

"A large place has now become necessary. We have one in view and have been considering how to meet the additional expense. This is the plan we propose: 1. To beg among the gentlemen here for money to fit it up for the two-fold purpose of a school and chapel. 2. To found a school on the Lancastrian plan.

"By the laws of the republick no *white* can own property, or exercise any office. We thought it necessary to lay our proposals before the President; we insert his answer."

"PORT AU PRINCE, May 27, 1817.

"Alexander Petion, President of Hayti, to Messrs. John Brown and James Catts.

"Gentlemen,

"I have received your letter of the 14th inst. requesting my permission to establish a school here on the Lancastrian plan, and to receive for that purpose those contributions which the inhabitants of this capital are disposed to afford you.

"Agreeably to your desires, I hasten to grant you the authority you request; and I shall witness with pleasure your project crowned with the success which its merits, being fully convinced that education raises man to the dignity of his being, and contributes to render him happy in society.

"As to the exercise of your religion, the 59th article of our constitution provides for freedom of worship: and, therefore, nothing will prevent you, while acting in conformity to the law established for all, from discharging the pious duties of the mission committed to your trust. I shall willingly do all that lies in my power, gentlemen, to prove to the honourable society whose missionaries you

are, how much I am flattered by the selection which it has made of you, and how much I desire to concur with them in promoting the happiness of my fellow men.

"Apply to me with confidence on all occasions in which I can be of service to you, and receive the assurance of my perfect consideration."  
PETITION."

The committee have reason to expect an equally favourable opening to another part of this important island, which they have resolved to embrace as soon as suitable persons can be obtained for the enterprise.

(To be continued.)

*Monthly extracts from the correspondence of the British and Foreign Bible Society: for April, 1818.*

*From the Rev. W. A. Voppel, Counsellor of Consistory, to the Rev. Dr. Schwabe.*

EISENACH, JAN. 27, 1818.

The assembly which met in the Town Hall, for the purpose of establishing the Eisenach Bible Society, was very respectable and numerous. The chief men of the town and the neighbourhood attended. Our General Superintendent addressed the meeting, explaining the nature and importance of the object, and warming their hearts in its behalf, after this I reported what had already been done, directed the attention of the audience to the great want of the Scriptures in our country, and encouraged them to sign their names as subscribers and benefactors to the society. This was immediately done, and not one of the persons assembled declined. The honourable privy counsellor, Von Goechhausen, was chosen president, a nobleman of much zeal for the good cause; but, as his great age begins to weigh heavy on him, our worthy, vigorous, and very active general superintendent was attached to him as vice president. All the members of the committee are not only men of great respectability, but also animated by an ardent zeal for the important object. Thus, at length, the work has been brought about, which for years I have been labouring to accomplish. The day of the establishment of our Bible society proved a great comfort to my mind; I know the importance of it to my country, as I am acquainted with the spiritual wants of the people, *and their desire after the word of God*. Very many among us are destitute of this precious book. A few weeks ago I inquired into our school, and there were 60 children whose parents had no Bible in their possession, much as they want it for their instruction. I am daily applied to, both personally and by letter, for copies of the scriptures. The blessing of the Lord evidently rests upon the money you intrusted to me; I am continually receiving some addition to it from one quarter or another; thus, for instance, our funds were increased by the produce of a discourse which I delivered on the occasion of the bringing in of the first fruits of the harvest, which enabled me not only to distribute a number of Bibles, to children and adults, both in the town and in the country, partly gratuitously, partly at a very low rate,

but also to present the grown up children of the working school of the ladies' association with a Bible each, on the day of the Jubilee of the reformation, and to make a donation of a number of Bibles to a newly established free school for the poor.

*From a correspondent in a catholick town in Germany.*

FEBRUARY 6, 1818.

Last month we had to cope with a fresh class of applicants for New Testaments; namely, the soldiers, who were eagerly demanding copies, which, they said, they had such excellent opportunity of reading in their leisure hours in the barracks. No less than 200 applied in the course of two days. We had at that time no stock of bound copies, and yet were much concerned lest delay should cool their zeal, when, at the very instant, there arrived from professor Von Ess; several packages, containing 150 bound copies of his New Testament, for which we had not previously made any particular request.

We likewise have profited by opposition. From every quarter applications are making for Bibles. People are desirous to know what may be contained in the *forbidden book*, and many are made acquainted with it through their curiosity. The Jews likewise request copies, and we have dispersed to them upwards of fifteen. A Rabbi, whose attention I directed to the sermon on the Mount, causing him to observe the greater purity of the moral precepts contained in it, in comparison with the letter of the Old Testament, ran joyfully away, holding his finger upon the chapter, full of zeal to communicate this discovery to his disciples. May the Lord bless the scattered seed.

## DOMESTICK.

### EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN VIRGINIA.

*Address of the Right Rev. Bishop Moore, to the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of Virginia; held on Tuesday, the 19th of May, 1818.*

BRETHREN,—The narrative of my episcopal tour, in consequence of its recurrence every year, would cease to enlist your feelings, or to command your attention, were it not for that view of the church which it affords you. Every circumstance which has the least bearing upon her interest, I am convinced must be important in your estimation; and as I perceive in the Laity of our communion such a devotion to her cause, as I perceive in them a disposition to rescue her from oblivion, and to raise her from the dust, my bosom is inspired with confidence, and I am encouraged to proceed in the history of my official proceedings:

Immediately upon the adjournment of the last convention, I visited Alexandria, preached in both the churches in that city, admit-



ted to the order of Deacon, Mr. John Byran and Mr. Keith, and to the Priesthood the Rev. William Steel, of the county of Prince William. After my return, in July, from the general convention, I visited the county of Chesterfield, and preached to an attentive auditory in Falling creek church. Hanover formed the next object of my attention, in which county I preached in three of the churches belonging to our communion, and in one meeting house erected upon a general plan. I administered the rite of confirmation in that district of the diocese to a small number of our members; and witnessed, with infinite pleasure, that devotion to the interest of our communion, for which that section of the church is so peculiarly, so highly distinguished. When I mention the warm devotion of that congregation to the church, I would not be understood to embrace in the expression the most distant idea of religious bigotry. They entertain and express a tenderness for all the sincere worshippers of God, but, bred in our brethren, instructed in our principles, and well informed upon every point connected with vital piety, they have united in a determination to rally round the altar of their fathers; and by such exertions as will reflect honour upon their venerable families and names to the latest posterity, they have justified their claim to my gratitude and respect.

In the month of September I embarked in a journey to some of the more distant counties. In Nelson I preached a funeral sermon to a large and deeply impressed auditory, on the occasion of the death of the venerable mother of Judge Cabell. She died, as she had lived, an ornament to the episcopal church of Virginia. Her memory is embalmed by the tears, not only of her children and descendants, but of all who were favoured with her acquaintance. I then crossed James River, into the county of Campbell, and preached twice on Sunday, in the methodist church, and on Monday evening in the presbyterian church in Lynchburg. The weather being very rainy, congregations were comparatively small, but serious and devout. I then visited New London, and officiated in the church near that place, to a numerous assembly, whose sensibility to the truths of religion warmed my heart, and convinced me of their piety and zeal. From New London I proceeded to Mecklenburg, and consecrated a new church erected by the parishioners of the Rev. Mr. Ravenscroft. In that place, brethren, in which the church was thought to be extinct, the friends of our communion have awakened from their slumbers; aided by the exertions of their faithful and labourious minister, they have raised a temple sacred to the living God. May that Saviour whom they worship with so much ardour and sincerity of heart, accept their sacrifice, and remember them for good.

From Mecklenburg I proceeded to the county of Brunswick, and preached to a very large assembly. From thence I went to Dinwiddie, and officiated in the church formerly occupied by the Rev. Mr. Jarratt. As I approached the sacred edifice, I viewed it with sensations of no common description. When I entered its walls, I felt that I was treading on holy ground; and such was my impression

of mind, that I could not forbear from supplicating Heaven for the mantle of that estimable, that holy man of God. May Jehovah, in mercy grant, that my brethren of the clergy, who now hear me, may imitate his bright example: unawed by the world, may they live as he did, and leave the minds of their people as deeply impressed with their piety, as the minds of Mr. Jarratt's parishioners are with his. I next visited Petersburg, and preached in that place to a small but respectable auditory.

Having remained in my own parish a few weeks, I made an excursion in the eastern part of the idocess. I commenced my labours in Gloucester county to a small and attentive audience. I then visited Matthew's county, and performed the last funeral solemnities for the Rev. Mr. Smith. That gentleman continued his labours until he was arrested by the disease which terminated his life; and it is with pleasure I mention, that his parishioners spoke of him with the greatest tenderness and respect. He has left a widow and children behind him, who are settled in great comfort, and deservedly enjoy the confidence and regard of all who know them.

From Matthew's I went to Urbana, and preached upon a Sabbath to a large and deeply impressed auditory. I then repaired to Tappahannock, and officiated in that place with great satisfaction to my own mind, and I trust, some benefit to those who heard me. The congregation was very respectable, and many of them appeared to be deeply pious. From thence I went to the church in the county of Essex, and was amply repaid for my labour by the devout attention of a worshipping people. I then bent my course to Port Royal, where I officiated to a large and attentive congregation. In that place I have always been delighted with the behaviour of the inhabitants during divine worship; and from the representations made to me, I indulge a hope that it will not be long before they will unite in support of a clergyman. From Port Royal I repaired to King George connty; and, although the court was sitting at the time, the judges benevolently accommodated me with an opportunity of preaching to the people.

I then went to Fredericksburg, in order to admit the Rev. Mr. M'Guire to the priesthood. In that place I preached as usual to a very large congregation—a congregation who know and who love the truth.

In the month of March I visited the church of Norfolk, preached twice to large and respectable congregations, and administered the rite of confirmation to a considerable number. The church of Norfolk is in a very flourishing condition: their worthy pastor, the Rev. Mr. Low, stands high in the estimation of his parishioners and labours in the gospel with great fidelity.

On my way to this convention, I passed a few days in Alexandria, in which city I preached three times; twice in Christ church, and once in St. Paul's. St. Paul's, brethren, is a new building, and was consecrated to the service of God the last Sabbath. It is an edifice honourable to the congregation, an ornament to the town, and reflects the greatest credit upon the labours of its worthy pastor, the



Rev. Mr. Wilmer. After the consecration service was concluded, I held a confirmation at the church, and imposed my hands and invoked the blessing of God upon eighty-eight persons belonging to the two churches in that city. In Alexandria the church is rapidly advancing in numbers and in piety. The congregations are overflowing and listen with the greatest avidity to the truths of the gospel.

In my own parish, brethren, it is my duty to mention that my people continue to me their affectionate regard; the number of the communicants increase, and the congregation is very respectable. I endeavour to secure the affections of my parishioners, by a faithful attention to my parochial duties; and, in order to promote the interests of the church, I sometimes lecture from one to three times in the week, independent of my Sabbath exercises. If fidelity to God, and to their eternal interests, will secure me the blessing of heaven, that blessing, I trust, will be obtained.

Brethren, we have much to encourage us in the prosecution of the important object in which we are jointly engaged. Many of the laity of this diocese discover an ardour in the cause of religion and the church, which is calculated to inspire the minds of the clergy with the greatest energy and hope. While we perceive in them an animation so laudable, the clergy cannot despair of success. United in love, we will advance in a solid column, fighting under the banner of the Lord Jesus Christ; the powers of sin and darkness, I trust, will be vanquished, the glory of God be promoted, our dilapidated churches be re-built, and Zion rear her drooping head.

To promote the cause of genuine religion is our only object; and, as that object is legitimate, it must succeed. We know of no enemies but the enemies of our exalted Redeemer: we stretch forth the right hand of fellowship to all who in sincerity call upon the Lord Jesus Christ; we expect to meet in heaven with christians of all denominations; and, while we labour in our department, we wish prosperity to all the Saviour's friends. Yes, brethren, in heaven distinctions will be done away; we shall then be imbodyed under one name, "The spirits of the just made perfect;" and in joyful union we will unite with them and angels, in singing unto him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; unto Jesus, the exalted, precious Jesus, be all honour and glory ascribed, for ever and ever. Amen.

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FROM THE RELIGIOUS REMEMBRANCER.

#### FASHIONABLE AMUSEMENTS.

The tendency of certain fashionable amusements having recently claimed more than ordinary notice in different sections of the Christian Church, these amusements have been formally denounced as repugnant to every principle of the Gospel, and as the insidious means of introducing sentiments and practices injurious to civil society, and opposed to the pursuits of evangelical religion. In the

discussions which the subject has occasioned, in the ecclesiastical assemblies which have taken order on it, piety and talents of a superiour grade have been called into exercise, to place more distinctively in the view of the observer the characteristic which mark the disparity which subsists between the Church of God and the world lying in sin; between the votaries of those fascinations which drown men's souls in perdition, and the humble followers of Jesus, who, having their conversation in heaven, aspire to celestial joys, and anticipate, in spiritual privileges and holy exercises, those pure pleasures which shall perpetually flow from the throne of God, when the delusions of sin shall be realised by their victims to have terminated in the gloom of eternal despair.—The following preamble and resolution relative to the subject which we have here noticed, were proposed by *C. F. Mercer*, esq. in the convention of the protestant episcopal church in Virginia, but superceded by the adoption of the Resolution published in page 167 of the Remembrancer; we doubt not, however, but the publication of this expression of sentiment will be approved by our readers.

WHEREAS differences of opinion have at all times existed in Christian communities, as to the criminal tendency of certain customs or amusements, springing from affections of the heart, which, innocent in themselves, lose that character through excessive indulgence; and legislatures, civil as well as ecclesiastical, have, by abstaining from the enactment of positive laws to regulate or punish them, admitted the difficulty of distinguishing between their use and abuse, except where the consequences of such abuse left no doubt of their guilt or impropriety.

To prescribe, by practicable legal rules, the proper boundary of expense in dress, furniture, or equipage; or of any other indulgence of taste; to mark the exact limit, beyond which the desire of wealth becomes avarice or extortion, would be as difficult as to regulate and enforce the rights and obligations of hospitality or friendship. It is for God to judge the heart of man.

It is the province of this convention to legislate for the government of the church of this diocess, subject to the ordinances or canons of the American Protestant Episcopal Church.

Its legislation is not by recommendations, but laws. It is the province and duty of the clergy, not only to enforce the sanction of those laws, but to add to recommendations persuasions and entreaties; to discountenance *vice* and *irreligion* by denunciations and threats; to encourage virtue and piety, by the invitations, the hopes, and the rewards of that gospel which they are commissioned to preach.

The great rule of moral action is prescribed to both clergy and laity, by the unchangeable word of God.

But, although this convention deems any expression of its mere opinion upon any subject as a departure from its peculiar and appropriate duties, a necessity is at present urged upon it, by a regard to its own character, to counteract the tendency of misrepresentation, to pervert its real motives in relation to certain decisions

of its late sessions, on a subject which has interested the church of this diocess.

It has been again called upon by some of its members to discountenance certain fashionable amusements, and it has been said, that its reluctance, on a former occasion, to depart from its proper province, amounted to a tacit recognition of their innocence.

With respect to gaming, by which is understood *play for money or other valuable thing*, whatever form it may assume, it is undoubtedly a practice repugnant alike to divine and to human law.

No canon of this church ought to be regarded as necessary, nor any expression required, of the opinion of this convention, to discountenance a practice so iniquitous, both in its immediate effects, and its remote consequences, if, indeed, it exists among the members of this church.

That the theatre has, in every country in which it has existed, led to the corruption of morals, might be inferred from the general character of the dramas which it exhibits, if the dangerous circumstances attending the exhibition itself, the numerous temptations to extravagance and vice, to which it exposes its actors and its audience, left any room to doubt its pernicious tendency.

It will be the proper time to distinguish between the use and the abuse of this fascinating amusement, when the stage shall have been so regulated as to realize the hope of those who would regard it as a school of christian morality.

That dancing, a natural exercise among all nations, civilized or savage, blended sometimes, (as its sister art, musick, has often been,) in their religious ceremonies, has been, frequently is, and always may be innocently and usefully conducted, those only will question, whose entire inexperience of the world has left them in ignorance of its effects on the heart and manners.

That crowded and promiscuous publick assemblies, where no security exists for the moral character of those who compose them, except what arises from the possession of the means of purchasing admission; where both gaming and drunkenness are either licensed or tolerated; where amusement reels into debauchery, and time, and fortune, and health pay the price of a fleeting and feverish gratification of love of pleasure; that all such assemblies are hostile to the spirit of christianity, those who have most frequently witnessed their contagious influence must be ever most ready to acknowledge.

Yet this convention will not undertake to say, that individuals have not entered innocently these dangerously scenes of pleasure, or passed through them unhurt.

Still less is it about to denounce and rebel, by its canons, from the bosom of the church, those who, to its regret, may sometimes appear to countenance them.

The church warns its members of impending danger: but, in cases of doubt, leaves their innocence or guilt to the judgment of an all-seeing God, to the conscience of man, his vicegerent on earth.

Having said so much to the laity, this convention would conclude the expression which it has reluctantly made of these opinions, with



affectionately urging upon the ministers of religion, while they enforce the necessary discipline of their respectable churches in conformity with the rubrick and canons, to unite tenderness with authority.

In the pastoral language of an earlier age of the church, "it is not enough that ye are the fathers, be ye also the mothers of your flock."

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### BAPTIST MISSIONS.

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*Institution for improving the education of pious young men, called to the Christian Ministry.*

(Concluded from page 188, vol. 3.)

That there are in the church eminent ministers of Christ whose opportunities of mental improvement have been small, furnishes occasion for holy joy. Never let human acquirements be regarded as indispensably necessary for pulpit duties. Should it however be inferred that mental improvement is of no moment, the inference is no more correct than that because sometimes God converts men by a thunder storm the ministry of the gospel may be laid aside. Ask those excellent men who, without literary aid, have become great in the church of Christ, their ideas of the value of education, and without an exception you will hear them deplore the want of it. If their eminence and usefulness have been great without learning, what would they have been had they possessed it? Who are the divines whose works stand in the world for the defence of the gospel, above all others? It need not be answered they were men signalized for the variety and extent of their erudition, as well as for their soundness in faith, the riches of their experience, and the purity of their conversation.

But learning makes men proud! Alas, such is the frailty of the human heart, that pride will spring as a noxious plant, whether the soil in which it grows be cultivated or not. Pride is not the associate of wisdom only. The most unlettered professors may sometimes be classed among the proudest. The preacher may be as proud, while from the pulpit he is inveighing against that learning which he does not possess, as he who before his congregation opens a thousand of its stores. Superficial literature may produce vanity; but sound learning, sanctified attainments, originate and maintain unaffected humility.

It is hoped that the churches of our denomination are becoming more and more convinced of the duty of assisting pious youths in their education; and do we need arguments to strengthen this conviction? Had ancient prophets their schools for the edification of their youth, and shall we not endeavour to have Naioths and Bethels now? Enemies of christianity are employing learning for its overthrow, and shall not the champions of the Cross be assisted to meet them on equal ground? Did not much of the superstition and

folly of the dark ages of the church arise from an unlettered ministry? Has not the reformation, under God, sprung from the intrepidity of men who have been as eminent for learning as for zeal and piety? Is it not the interest of the churches that their spiritual guides possess every possible qualification for advancing their knowledge of divine subjects? Have not the churches, already, realized many important advantages from the literary institutions which exist in our connexion? And ought not such considerations to animate to new and continued exertions?

Youth is undoubtedly the best period for mental improvement; not only because it is a season of inexperience, and freedom from care, but because the memory is then the most tenacious. The habits of study and reflection which are commenced in early life, usually become permanent. Early improvement promises extensive usefulness. Many young men in our churches are anxiously desirous to avail themselves of those advantages which a literary and theological institution supplies. They are not able to support the inevitable expenses of their subsistence, clothing, washing, books, &c. without the aid of their christian brethren. Let then the churches of Christ zealously exert themselves. How soon their worthy pastors that go in and out before them may be removed they cannot tell. Their liberality may be rewarded, richly rewarded, by obtaining from the candidates they have assisted equal successors in pastoral office. Let generous and pious individuals offer of their substance to the sanctuary of the Lord. Let the rich encourage education societies by their contributions and by their bequests. Such as have duplicates of useful works in their libraries are respectfully and importunately requested to favour this institution with their supernumerary volumes, towards the formation of a library for the use of its students.

The cause is the Lord's. Its aim is the prosperity of the churches; and its supporters will find ample consolation in committing the whole to the protection of the Supreme Head of the church, and in a holy and resolute perseverance to expend their talents and substance to the praise of his glory.

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*Translation of the Scriptures into the language of Burmah.*

The Baptist Board of Foreign Missions for the United States, with respectful and anxious importunity, address the friends of the holy scriptures. They rejoice that the day has arrived when thousands have their hearts engaged to give universal circulation to the sacred volume. The importance and efficiency of combined exertion are abundantly evinced, and afford encouragement for new endeavours.

Among other indications of human ignorance and misery, it is a fact deserving pity, and which should command beneficence, that the Burmans, a people upwards of 17,000,000 in number, are destitute of the Bible. Missionaries are at Rangoon, among whom is Rev. Mr. Judson, who has made himself master of the language, and

is proceeding to translate the holy word; but what will a translation avail without the means of circulating it? Paper must be obtained, and expenses attendant on the printing encountered—and at this moment assistance is loudly called for. And will the christian world permit this important service to be impeded in its career? It is believed they will not! Bible societies it is hoped will afford their aid. Possibly translation societies may be formed, or at least private contributions and publick collections obtained, which would immediately facilitate the design, and ultimately accomplish it. The board affectionately request that their christian brethren will direct their immediate attention to this point, and communicate the sums they may obtain, as early as practicable, to John Cauldwell, esq. the treasurer of the board, to Rev. Luther Rice, its agent, or to WM. STAUGHTON, *Cor. Sec.*

May 7, 1818.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

*Extract from an Epistle of the Yearly Meeting of the society of Friends held in London.*

“Amidst the trials of the present day, we are comforted in the belief that the minds of the people are in a good degree preparing for the further diffusion of divine light and knowledge. The Holy Scriptures are now circulated by the exertions of the Bible Society among nations who had never heard of them before, and generally, throughout the world, to an extent unexampled in any former period. This, and an increasing zeal to promote the general education of the poor, are two of the most remarkable circumstances of the present times, and must prove, in a high degree, consolatory to those who are anxious to promote the best interests of men. It is further animating to observe, that with us as well as with you, there is a growing conviction among persons not of our religious society, that war, upon any pretence, is inconsistent with the principles of the gospel. May we, by a steady adherence to those testimonies which have been given us to bear, be instruments in the divine hand of exalting this peaceable principle, and may each of us, in our respective measures, co-operate towards the accomplishment of that glorious prophecy, ‘that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.’”

### A STRANGER'S CONVERSION.

*The following was communicated by a worthy Minister who was acquainted with the fact.*

Some years ago, the Rev. Mr. W——, of S——, left his people a few days to visit the town of E——, where was a powerful revival of religion. As he was returning, he recollected that in the intermediate town lived a young woman, a daughter of one of the most



pious men in the church, with her uncle. He became deeply impressed with a desire to call, and by relating what he had seen at E——, to endeavour to persuade her to embrace the Saviour. This was his sole object. On entering the house, he perceived a young lady, a stranger to him, on a visit. She was from N——, a town at a large distance. Her name and place of abode was announced. She had been a few days at E——, and, as afterwards appeared, she there in the levity of her heart ridiculed the work which she saw.

Mr. W——, soon began his errand in the presence of the family, confining his observations almost wholly to the daughter. She treated him and his message with respect; but after an hour's conversation, he left her under the impression that his labour was in vain. But that *God who worketh all things after counsel of his own will*, fixed an arrow in the heart of the stranger. Wounded with a sense of guilt and danger, she in a few days returned to her native town; and there, after a season of powerful conviction, became a subject of christian hope; and by her conversation, through the blessing of the spirit, she was the means of the awakening and conversion of a number of youths her companions.

Nothing of this was known to Mr. W——, till a long time afterwards; when in the same family, he was informed of her triumphant death, and of all that is above related of her experience. He thought of the words, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand: for thou knowest not which shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they shall be both alike, good"—and he felt strongly encouraged ever to do likewise.

This fact is not mentioned as a solitary instance; doubtless many ministers of the gospel have witnessed similar things: but it is mentioned as an encouragement to ministers on all occasions, to perform this duty. They may often do essential good, though they do not directly see it. Acting on this encouragement, Mr. W—— has himself been prospered in more instances than one. When it comes to his knowledge, it will be a cordial—what will it be above! The conversion of one soul, though that of a stranger, will be an ample compensation for years of labour and self-denying exertion.

The daughter remained four or five years longer in impenitence, and then became hopefully a subject of special grace.

[Relig. Intel.]

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*Lines Occasioned by the Question, "What is Life?"*

LIFE is a short, a cloudy day,  
And like a post, it hastes away;  
A shadow that deludes our eyes,  
And as we still pursue it flies.

An hospital, where dire disease,  
And ghastly death their victims seize;  
Where groans of anguish fill the ear,  
And scenes of deepest woe appear.

## THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

A stream, whose glassy smoothness shows,  
The form of motionless repose;  
Yet does with rapid progress keep  
Advancing to the silent deep.

A sea, where rocks and quick-sands lie  
Hid from the navigator's eye;  
Or foaming billows round him roar,  
To drive him from his destin'd shore.

A race, in which both old and young  
Engage, press eagerly along;  
Though few perceive before their eyes,  
And fewer still obtain the prize.

Life is like transitory dreams  
Of groves, and meads, and walks, and streams,  
Which, at th' approach of Sol's bright ray,  
Pass like the shades of night away.

Why then should this delusive stream,  
This Lazar-house, sea, race, and dream,  
The genuine christian's soul annoy  
With groundless fears, or transient joy.

Jesus, thou Prince of Israel's race,  
On me bestow thy saving grace;  
That when from earthly cares set free,  
I may forever live with Thee.

G. B. W.

## A BOOK NEGLECTED.

I've seen a book some where I know,  
That look'd as if 'twas kept for show;  
'Twas nice and clean, and not an edge  
But shone as bright as golden wedge;  
The leaves unlike to those at school  
Which masters scarce preserve by *rule*:  
And cover too—without a scratch—  
Almost with looking glass 'twould match:  
And what was't pray, that they were able  
To keep so pure?—Why friend—a BIBLE!

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